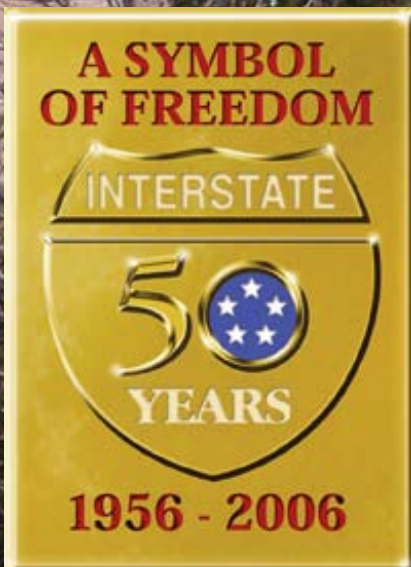


# Arkansas Highways

Winter 2005/2006



# Director's Message



As we enter the new year, the Arkansas State Highway and Transportation Department (AHTD) will join the rest of the nation in celebrating the 50th anniversary of our Interstate highway system in the United States. It was in 1956 that President Dwight D. Eisenhower signed the Federal-Aid Highway Act that created the Highway Trust Fund as a dedicated source of funding for the Interstate Highway System.

Today's Interstate system is a 47,000-mile network of multi-lane highways that carries 24 percent of all vehicle travel in our nation. Americans travel over 650 billion miles on the system each year for both work and recreation. The system has opened the door for

increased tourism and economic development.

The year 2006 will be known as "The Year of the Interstate." The celebrations kicked off at the North American International Auto Show in Detroit. Governor Mike Huckabee, as Chairman of the National Governors Association, will participate in a national celebration on June 29th, 2006, in Washington, D.C. Events will also take place here in Arkansas. But as we celebrate our accomplishments, we must also look ahead. The nation's population is expected to grow by over 50 million people by the year 2025 and vehicle travel is expected to increase over 40 percent. As we note our accomplishments, we must take this opportunity to identify the needs of our Interstate network over the next 50 years and determine how to preserve and enhance this system in the face of accelerating travel demand.

Looking back on 2005, I want to recognize the employees of the Highway and Transportation Department who were called upon this fall to help with hurricane relief efforts in the Gulf Coast area and here at home. Under the worst of conditions and with very little advance notice these employees provided much needed help to those in need. Some traveled to Mississippi to aid in security efforts and inspections of roadways in the area. Others worked here at home to provide assistance for the many evacuees who lost their homes and came to our state seeking shelter. For all involved, it was indeed a job well done, their work was greatly appreciated and we are proud of the manner in which they represented the Highway and Transportation Department.

Congratulations are in order for the employees who recently participated in the 3rd Annual Regional Equipment Operators Rodeo. Winners from the AHTD statewide Rodeo traveled to Myrtle Beach, South Carolina, to compete with teams from the southeast region of the country, and for the third year in a row, came home as Rodeo Champions. The event is growing bigger in popularity and size each year and, as always, our Department employees exhibited their great skills and professionalism.

  
Director of Highways and Transportation

## ARKANSAS STATE HIGHWAY COMMISSION



**Prissy Hickerson**  
Chairman



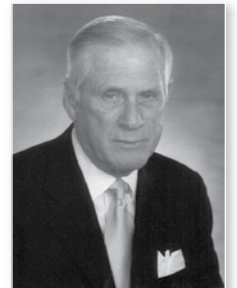
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Member



**John Ed Regenold**  
Member

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*Arkansas Highways* is printed on recycled paper with soybean ink.

# Arkansas Highways

Arkansas State Highway and Transportation Department - Winter 2005/2006

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**Front:** Interstate 430 extending over the Arkansas River in Pulaski County

**Back:** State Highway 14 in Searcy County

# *This issue of Arkansas Highways is Dedicated to the Memory of:*



## *James A. Branyan*

Former Highway Commissioner James A. Branyan of Camden passed away on November 3, 2005. Branyan served on the Arkansas State Highway Commission from 1973 to 1983. He was 72 years old.

A native of Glendale, Arkansas, Branyan was appointed to the Commission by then Governor Dale Bumpers in January of 1973. Branyan served as Vice Chairman of the Commission from 1979 to 1980, and served as Chairman beginning in 1981 until his term ended on January 14, 1983.

Branyan was a graduate of Henderson State University. He was a businessman in the clothing, jewelry and advertising industries and owned the Downtown Antique Mall in Camden. He served as Vice President and Secretary of Walker & Associates Advertising Agency in Little Rock and Memphis, Tennessee.

Branyan was a member of the Jaycees and served as President of the Camden Jaycees, Vice President of the Arkansas Jaycees and National Director of the United States Jaycees. He served as President of the Lions Club and was Vice President of the Camden Chamber of

Commerce. In addition, he was on the Board of Directors of the National Housing Board.

He received Camden's Distinguished Service Award in 1965 and the Camden Man of the Year Award in 1970.

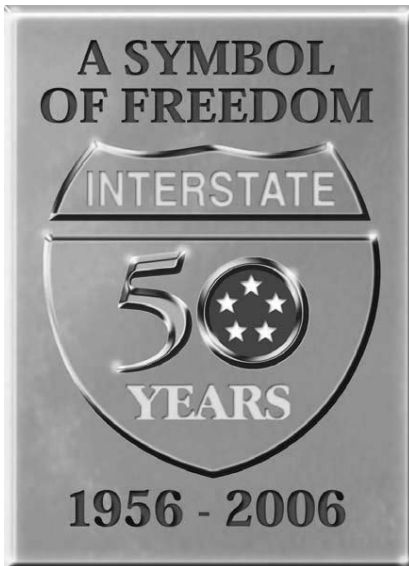
Branyan was instrumental in developing many highways throughout our state, including Highway 7 and 79 in south Arkansas. Those highways now serve as major arteries for motorists in south Arkansas. The Branyan-Hunicutt Bypass on Highway 79 in Camden is named in his honor. Branyan served on the Board of the Arkansas Good Roads/Transportation Council until his death. He was also a member of the Interstate 69 Coalition and served on the executive committee of the Interstate 69 Arkansas Board.

"Mr. Branyan has been a strong advocate for transportation improvements in Arkansas for many years. His contribution to our state has been very significant," stated Director Dan Flowers.

He is survived by his wife, Shirley, and two daughters, Cherel and Rhonda.

# THE YEAR OF THE INTERSTATE

## Interstate System Celebrates 50 Years



On June 29th of 2006, the United States will celebrate the 50th Anniversary of our Interstate Highway System. It was on this date, in 1956, that President Dwight D. Eisenhower signed the Federal-Aid Highway Act, which created the Highway Trust Fund as a dedicated source of funding for the Interstate Highway System. The Dwight David Eisenhower System of Interstate and

Defense Highways was one of the biggest engineering projects ever undertaken. Subsequent acts by Congress have expanded the Interstate system to what it is today.

Across the country, 2006 will be known as "The Year of the Interstate." Anniversary events will include participation at the North American International Auto Show, a re-enactment of the Eisenhower 1919 Cross Country Convoy, a television documentary, exhibits, a photo contest and individual state celebrations. This milestone is also an opportunity to focus public attention on the essential role the Interstate system plays in our daily lives and identify the needs of the Interstate system over the next 50 years in the face of accelerating travel demand.

Arkansas Governor Mike Huckabee, Chairman of the National Governors Association (NGA), has put the future of the Interstate Highway System as a top priority for his term, which began at the NGA's annual meeting in July. At his request, the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials will work with the NGA on research, public involvement, information policy development and consensus building about the condition and future needs of the Interstate system.

There is some disagreement over when the first Interstate was constructed. Pennsylvania, with its turnpike, Missouri, with its Inter-

states 44 and 70, and Kansas with its Interstate 70, all claim to be first. However, all of these roads were either started before the Interstate Act was approved or were upgrades of existing roads. The Pennsylvania Turnpike opened in October of 1940, and was the first limited-access, divided highway in the country. Arkansas can lay claim to the fact that, in 1975, it became the first state to complete its original allotment of Interstate highway miles.

Today, the 46,508-mile Interstate system carries 24 percent of vehicle travel in the nation. The longest Interstate is Interstate 90, which runs from Boston to Seattle, a distance of 3,081 miles. At 75 mph, it would take a driver 41 hours to cover that distance non-stop. The shortest Interstate is Interstate 878 in New York City, which is all of seven-tenths of a mile long. Alaska is the only state without any Interstate routes.

The web of superhighways that make up the Interstate system has transformed our nation and our economy. Americans traveled 667 billion miles on the Interstate in the year 2000 for work, recreation and family needs. The economic impact of the system is incalculable. Trucks are the sole means of freight delivery to nearly 80% of all communities within the U.S. and 41% of total truck travel is on the Interstate Highway System.

The Arkansas State Highway and Transportation Department will be celebrating the anniversary with various events as the year unfolds. For more information on the national celebration, visit [www.interstate50th.org](http://www.interstate50th.org).



*Construction on Interstate 30 near Hope in 1970.*

# Response Plan Provides Assistance When Needed

From coast to coast across our country, each state shares a common threat...that of some form of natural or man-made disaster. Whether it is hurricanes or earthquakes, wildfires or toxic waste spills, terrorist attacks or biological and chemical incidents, the results can wreak havoc on our highway and transportation systems.

At times, the situation can be more than one state's Department of Transportation can handle and assistance may be needed. That is where EMAC enters the picture. EMAC, the Emergency Management Assistance Compact, is administered by the National Emergency Management Association. The purpose of the compact is to provide for mutual assistance between states in manag-

ing any emergency or disaster. Established in 1996, it is the first national disaster-relief compact to be ratified by Congress since the Civil Defense Compact of 1950.

In 2004, a series of hurricanes did significant damage in the Gulf Coast area. In October of 2005, EMAC released a report on the 2004 hurricanes revealing that, not only does EMAC work, but it is the most effective and efficient tool for state-to-state mutual aid that exists.

"We thought we had broken new ground last year, and we did," stated Jeff Phillips, chair of EMAC and the Emergency Operations Bureau Chief with the New Mexico Department of Public Safety. "We made adjustments and we'll be able to sustain it."

This past fall, the Compact was called upon again when Hurricane Katrina struck the Gulf Coast area. The state of Mississippi called on the Arkansas State Highway and Transportation Department (AHTD) for assistance in inspecting numerous bridges damaged by Katrina.

Volunteering for a one-week trip to Hancock County, Mississippi, in mid-October, were AHTD's Bridge Division employees, Bryan Freeling, Senior Bridge Design Engineer, and Dallas Stevens, Advanced Bridge Design Engineer.

"We were the only engineers there from out of state," stated Freeling. "We worked directly with the Mississippi Department of Transportation's Hancock County Engineer Geoff Clemens." **(Continued on page 8)**



(l. to r.) AHP officers Louis Hatchett, Mark Nunnery, Greg Massey and (walking away) Jeff Smith gather outside the Command Center for law enforcement agencies.



An AHP patrol car sits near the scene where the hurricane downed utility lines, displaced a houseboat and stripped a convenience store of its walls.



AHP officer Louie Smith flies over the coast to survey the destruction.



The AHTD sent 16 Highway Police Officers who volunteered to provide public safety in Jackson County, Mississippi. These officers included (front, l. to r.) CPL Jeff Yates, CPL Andy Smith, PTL Jeff Smith, CPL Brad Perkins, CPL Bruce Harris, and CPL Tim Choate. (rear, l. to r.) CPL Darren Smith, CPL Mark Pyburn, CPL Tim Culver, SGT Martin Nunnery, PFC Greg Massey, PFC Louis Hatchett, CPL David Stovall, SGT Scott Fraley, SGT Doug Honey, and PFC Nick Phillips.



AHP officers Scott Fraley (l.) and L.A. Smith examine damage on the coast.



AHP officers patrolling the coastal area encountered sights such as this auto buried in debris.



AHP officers assemble early in the morning to coordinate assignments at the Command Center.

"The Army Corps of Engineers had a large presence there, as well as regular Army engineer units and Navy Seabee units," added Stevens.

In addition to inspecting State Aid bridges in the Bay St. Louis area, they also looked at 13 miles of sea wall around Bay St. Louis and Waveland.

Bridge inspectors are only part of what the AHTD has available to aid other states in emergency situations. As part of EMAC, the AHTD has traffic engineering staff, portable generators, bucket trucks, arrow boards and changeable message signs and ten full debris removal teams, among other items and personnel, available upon request.

For example, since conditions after Hurricane Katrina demanded increased security, the AHTD sent 16 Highway Police Officers who volunteered to provide public safety in Jackson County, Mississippi. Another 35 officers were placed on standby status ready to respond.

The hurricanes also left the problem of finding shelter for thousands of homeless storm victims. The AHP Permit Section identified specific routes for the transport of manufactured housing across Arkansas into the Gulf Coast area without permit.

The number of evacuees was so large that camps were set up throughout Arkansas, including Fort Chaffee. AHP officers provided security at these camps. AHTD's Planning & Research Division located 46 buses for evacuee transport, and provided drivers to various camps in the area.

On a national level, EMAC will continue to look at the 2004 Hurricane After-Action report and the upcoming Katrina and Rita After-Action Reports for lessons learned and ways to enhance and improve on the EMAC system now in place.



*(l. to r.) Mike Pickens, Danny Loyd and Karon Everett of District 4 ready trucks with evacuee supplies at Fort Chaffee.*



*An AHTD flatbed truck is packed for aiding evacuees at Fort Chaffee.*



*(Background) A skeleton of a causeway is left on a portion of U.S. Highway 90, between the cities of Bay St. Louis and Pass Christian in Mississippi.*





A Waveland, Mississippi, bridge sustained substantial damage on the deck surface.



AHTD Bridge Design Engineer Bryan Freeling inspects the sea wall at Bay St. Louis, Mississippi.



One of the many damaged homes facing the shoreline on the Gulf Coast.



(l. to r.) Bridge Design Engineers Bryan Freeling and Dallas Stevens responded to the call for assistance in the Gulf Coast area.



AHTD employees assist evacuees seeking shelter in Arkansas.

# Arkansas Wins 3rd Regional Roadeo Title

The 3rd Annual Regional Equipment Operators Roadeo was held in Myrtle Beach, South Carolina, on October 26th and 27th. Teams from Arkansas, Georgia, Mississippi, North Carolina and South Carolina took turns showcasing their skills in events for tractor/lowboy, tandem axle dump truck, single axle dump truck, tractor/mower, backhoe and motor grader. The competition was intense since each team consisted of the top two winners in each field from the state competitions held earlier in the year.

The final results proved to be good news for the Arkansas State Highway and Transportation Department, as Arkansas'

team came away from the event as Regional Roadeo Champions for the third year in a row. Coming in second was Mississippi, followed by South Carolina in third place.

Competing on this year's AHTD team were Ronald Hughes from District 3; Fred Ridenhour and Bobby Dean from District 4; Wesley Hall from District 5; Darrell Barnes, Kenny Howard, Dennis Langston, Joe Villalobos and Randy White from District 8; and Lance Baker, Joey Ragland and Kenny Riley from District 9.

Next year's event will be hosted by the Georgia Department of Transportation.

## TEAM CHAMPIONSHIP RESULTS



The Arkansas State Highway and Transportation Department's championship team. (l. to r., front) Kenny Riley, Dennis Langston, Lance Baker, Bobby Dean, Fred Ridenhour and Wesley Hall. (l. to r., back) Bob Walters, Joey Ragland, Darrell Barnes, Joe Villalobos, Kenny Howard, Randy White and Ronald Hughes.

# 2005 Regional Equipment Operators Roadeo Results



## TRACTOR/LOWBOY



1st Place (middle):  
Darrell Barnes, Arkansas

2nd Place (left):  
Willie Butler, Mississippi

3rd Place (right):  
Bobby Chambers, Georgia

## TANDEM AXLE DUMP TRUCK



1st Place (middle):  
Richard Sutton, Mississippi

2nd Place (left):  
Robert Caines, Mississippi

3rd Place (right):  
Kenny Howard, Arkansas

## SINGLE AXLE DUMP TRUCK



1st Place (middle):  
Kevin Ellis, Mississippi

2nd Place (right):  
Joe Villalobos, Arkansas

3rd Place (left):  
Allen Moore, South Carolina

*(continued next page)*

## TRACTOR/MOWER

---



1st Place (middle):  
Fred Ridenhour, Arkansas

2nd Place (right):  
Vincent Necaïsse, Mississippi

3rd Place (left):  
Charles Whitten, South Carolina

## BACKHOE

---



1st Place (middle):  
Michael Murphy, South Carolina

2nd Place (right):  
Randy White, Arkansas

3rd Place (left):  
Jimmie Black, South Carolina

## MOTOR GRADER

---



1st Place (middle):  
Jerry Ellet, Mississippi

2nd Place (right):  
Dennis Langston, Arkansas

3rd Place (left):  
James Catoe, South Carolina

# First Year of Litter Hotline Proving Successful

In its first year of operation, the Arkansas State Highway and Transportation Department's (AHTD) Litter Hotline has seen positive results.

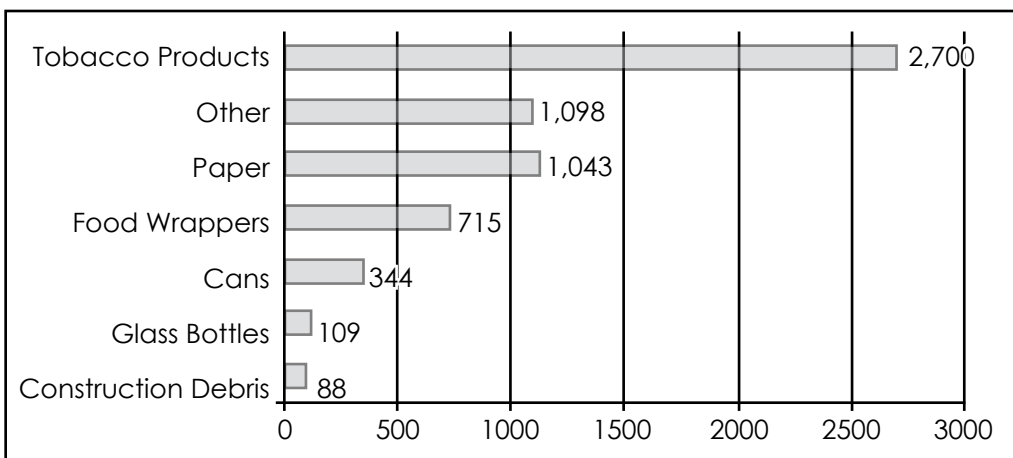
The 24-hour Litter Reporting Line was launched almost a year ago with First Lady Janet Huckabee. In that time, the hotline has had a steady stream of callers. In its first year, the hotline has received well over 5,000 calls. Each call results in a joint letter being sent to the violator from the Arkansas Highway Police and the Arkansas State Police.

"We are extremely pleased with the public's involvement with the program," stated AHTD Director Dan Flowers. "We hope we are helping to curb the litter problem in Arkansas."

The numbers show tobacco products as one of our biggest problems. A breakdown of the type of litter reported is shown in the chart below.

There are currently eight other states that have implemented similar Litter Reporting Systems. The hope is that not only will this make citizens more conscious of the litter problem, but will also give motorists a remedy for the frustrations of seeing others litter.

"Our Highway Police have answered over 5,000 calls on the litter hotline this year," said Arkansas Highway Police Chief Ron Burks. "We believe our efforts will help in reducing litter in Arkansas."



**REPORT LITTERING**

**1-866-811-1222**

Brought to you by Keep Arkansas Beautiful  
and the Arkansas State Highway & Transportation Department



The AHTD teamed with the Keep Arkansas Beautiful Commission, a Division of the Arkansas Department of Parks and Tourism, to promote the new litter hotline.

# Department Publishes Historical Review

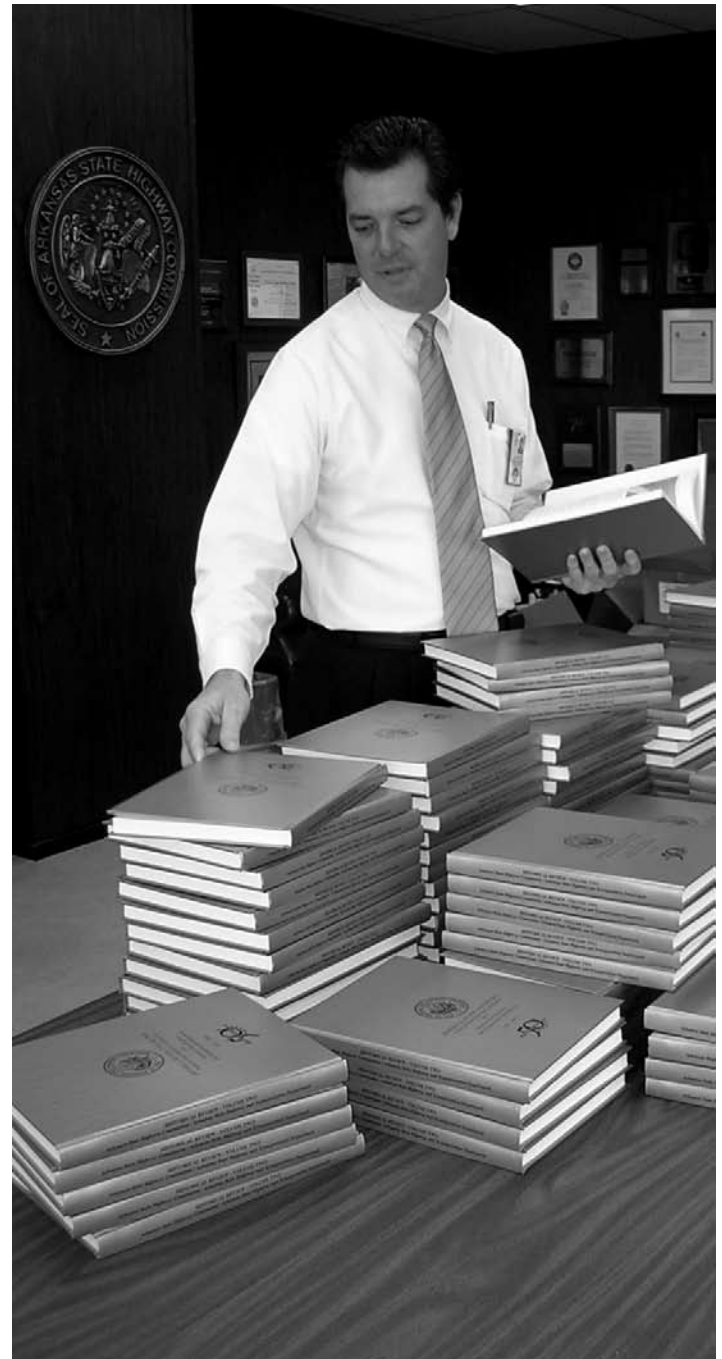
In recognition of the 50th Anniversary of the Mack-Blackwell Amendment, Amendment 42 to the Arkansas Constitution, the Highway and Transportation Department has recently published a comprehensive history book titled "Historical Review – Arkansas State Highway Commission and Arkansas State Highway and Transportation Department 1913 – 2003."

The book focuses on the accomplishments of the Commission and Department since the passing of the Mack-Blackwell Amendment in 1952. The amendment created the current independent structure of the Highway Commission as we know it today. The book was released this past summer and is the second Historical Review that the Department has published to celebrate the Amendment. The first book was published on the 40th anniversary of the Mack-Blackwell Amendment.

The new publication provides the most current historical information on the Highway Commission and the Department. It begins by taking a brief look at transportation in Arkansas, particularly road-building activities as they existed prior to the establishment of the Commission in 1913. Beginning with 1913, the book moves forward with individual chapters highlighting the accomplishments of each decade, concluding with the year 2003.

The book also includes a section devoted to the people who have served on the Arkansas State Highway Commission since the implementation of the Amendment in 1953. The appendices offer additional information and help trace the growth and progress of the Commission and Department.

The Department has provided the book to public schools, colleges and universities around the state to be included in their libraries. It has also been sent to the AHTD's Division and District offices, and to Departments of Transportation across the country.



*Public Information Coordinator Randy Ort prepares history books for distribution.*

# From Weed Trimmers to Passenger Buses, AHTD Auction Has It

The large crowd on hand for the Highway and Transportation Department's annual auction, held on November 1st, had a wide array of equipment to choose from. Surplus construction equipment, maintenance equipment, dump trucks, pickups, automobiles and much more were up for grabs to the highest bidder.

Among the smaller items available were weed trimmers and surveying equipment. On the larger end of the scale were a tractor-trailer rig, motor graders and a striper truck. A total of 33 Ford Taurus automobiles made their way to the auction block as did 127 pickup trucks of various sizes.

Blackmon Auctions got things under way for potential bidders at 9:00 a.m., and by the end of the day, 477 lots had been sold.

Final net proceeds to the Highway and Transportation Department totaled \$946,503.



# Interstate 30 from Little Rock to Benton Formally Dedicated

A smoother, wider section of Interstate 30 stretching 17 miles from Little Rock through Benton was formally dedicated on November 18th of 2005.

Governor Mike Huckabee joined highway officials and local leaders in cutting the ribbon on the new roadway that has proved to be popular with area commuters.

"It's a great day to celebrate the dedication of the improvements to Interstate 30," commented AHTD Director Dan Flowers. "This work provides motorists with a safer, easier drive."

The project cost \$200 million for improvements and involved rebuilding the original four main lanes, adding an ad-

ditional lane in each direction, adding concrete barrier walls and converting the access roads to one-way. Modifications to interchanges and new crossovers were also included in the project. The improvements stretch from Geyer Springs Road in Little Rock to Sevier Street in Benton.

"This project has improved the drive between Benton and Little Rock immensely," commented Highway Commissioner Carl Rosenbaum.

"Traffic volume on this Interstate is approximately 70,000 vehicles a day. That could double in 15 years but we are ready to handle it," he added. "Traffic moves smoothly now, even at rush hour."

Safety was a major consideration in the Interstate 30 project.

"We've not had one fatality on the access roads since the conversion to one way," stated Senator Shane Broadway of Bryant.

"We have now reached a point where we can brag about Arkansas and our Interstates," Governor Huckabee stated.

"With this work successfully completed, our focus turns to properly maintaining the Interstate in an effort to promote efficient travel for motorists between Little Rock and Benton," stated District 6 Engineer Emanuel Banks.





The project was included in the Arkansas State Highway and Transportation Department's (AHTD) Interstate Rehabilitation Program (IRP). It was five years ago that highway officials announced the five-year program. Today, the program is nearing an end. Since it began, more than 350 miles of Arkansas Interstates have been reconstructed. A total of 54 projects comprised the rehabilitation program. Only the Interstate 40 project in the Burns Park area of North Little Rock remains to be completed.

In addition to improved roadways, Arkansas is being showcased nationally for the Rehabilitation Program's innovative thinking, research, design and implementation. AHTD engineers are frequently asked to share their experiences at transportation industry conferences around the country and have even had foreign visitors from as far away as Russia to learn about the rehabilitation procedures.

"When you do your research and discover best practices in so many areas

and then combine them into one program, that's innovation in itself," said Highway Commission Chairman Prissy Hickerson.

A recent ranking of the nation's Interstates by *Overdrive* magazine included Interstate 40 in Arkansas as the number one "Most Improved" highway in the country. Interstate 30 in Arkansas ranked number three in the same category.

Communication to the public and the media during construction was a big component of the program. The "Pave the Way" promotional campaign utilized television, radio, billboards, an interactive website, brochures and variable message roadside signage to keep motorists informed of construction. Since the Interstate Rehabilitation Program began,

the AHTD has been recognized with nine awards for excellence in communications and work zone safety.

The program has had a significant impact on the economy of the state as well. Financial experts assess that the amount of construction work involved with the program has provided approximately 8,000 direct, on-site construction jobs in Arkansas.

As the program gets close to being completed, the AHTD has successfully met its goal of increasing safety for motorists. It has also advanced the prosperity of the state and contributed to overall economic development through the tourism and hospitality industries.



Improvements to Interstate 30 included an additional travel lane in each direction.

Participating in the Interstate 30 dedication, November 18, 2005, were (l. to r.) Arkansas Highway Commission Chairman Prissy Hickerson, Director Dan Flowers, Governor Mike Huckabee, District 6 Engineer Emanuel Banks and Commissioner Carl Rosenbaum. The Interstate 30 project was a part of the rehabilitation program.



Newly rehabilitated Interstate 30 at Benton.

# Three Named to New Positions

**David Lambert** has been named the AHTD's State Maintenance Engineer. He received the promotion in September of 2005, replacing Leonard Hall, who retired.

Lambert earned a bachelor's degree in civil engineering from the University of Arkansas at Fayetteville in 1971. He is a Registered Professional Engineer.

Lambert's career with the Department began in January of 1972. After finishing the AHTD engineering orientation program, he was assigned to the Bridge Division. While in Bridge, he held the titles of Civil Engineer I through III and Bridge Design Engineer. In 1977, he was promoted to Assistant Resident Engineer in Little Rock and then to Resident Engineer in Little Rock in 1983. Two years later, he transferred to the Maintenance Division as a Staff Heavy Bridge Maintenance Engineer. In November of 1985, Lambert assumed the responsibilities of the Heavy Bridge Maintenance Section. In 1994, he became the District Construction Engineer in District 6. He advanced to District Engineer in June of 2002.

**Emanuel Banks** replaced David Lambert as District 6 Engineer in December. Banks has a bachelor's degree in civil engineering from the University of Arkansas. He is a Registered Professional Engineer.

Banks' career with the AHTD began in 1987 as a Civil Engineer I in the Roadway Design Division. A year later, he advanced to Design Engineer and was promoted to Advanced Design Engineer in 1990. Banks transferred to the Resident Engineer Office in North Little Rock as an Advanced Construction Field Engineer in 1990 and became Resident Engineer in Little Rock in 1997. He became Staff Construction Engineer in 2002.

**Lynn Malbrough** was also promoted in December, to Division Head of the Environmental Division. He replaced Marion Butler, who retired. Malbrough has a master's degree in urban planning from the University of Mississippi.

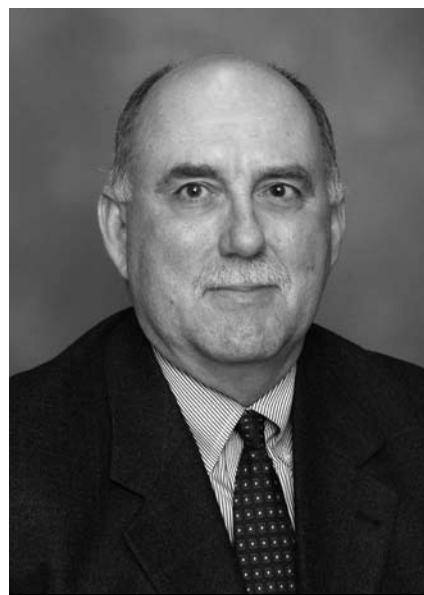
Malbrough's career with the Department began in 1989 as an Ecologist II in the Environmental Division. In 1991, he was promoted to Senior Environmental Scientist and obtained the title of Administrative Officer III in February of 2003. Five months later, he became the Section Head of Public Involvement. In May of 2005, he obtained the position of Assistant Division Head of Environmental.



*David Lambert,  
State Maintenance  
Engineer,  
Maintenance Division*



*Emanuel Banks,  
District Engineer,  
District 6*



*Lynn Malbrough,  
Division Head,  
Environmental Division*

# AHTD Shares “Work Zone Safety Awareness” Award

The Arkansas State Highway and Transportation Department (AHTD) and the University of Arkansas' Mack-Blackwell Rural Transportation Center (MBTC) were the proud recipients of a 2005 Roadway Work Zone Safety Awareness Award presented by The American Road and Transportation Builders Association (ARTBA) on September 29th. The award was presented at a luncheon

during the National Roadway Work Zone Safety Conference in Baltimore, Maryland.

The Work Zone Safety Awareness Awards Program is a competition designed to honor outstanding efforts to reduce roadway work zone construction accidents, injuries and fatalities. It is sponsored by ARTBA, the Transportation Development Foundation and the National Safety Council (NSC). Recipients of the award serve as an example to other organizations for continuous improvement and advancement of safety in construction work zones.

Award categories include programs with national, state and local-level scope in the areas of Government Outreach, Private Outreach and Worker Training. An independent panel of five ARTBA and NSC members served as judges.

The AHTD and the MBTC entered a series of five Work Zone Design Safety videos as a joint entry in the National Worker Training category. With funding facilitated by the AHTD, the videos were produced by University of Arkansas Professor of Civil Engineering, Dr. Jim Gattis, along with filming and editing by the University's Media Services Department.

The instructional series offers five distinct productions, each of which focuses attention on a specific work zone design topic. Titles include: “Drop Offs,” “Diversions,” “Signs of Work,” “Lane Closures” and “Work Zone Pavement Markings.”

Copies of the video series have been distributed to AHTD and contractor offices, so that instructors are not needed and the information is available any time an inspector or worker needs to review it.



*Farrell Wilson, AHTD Public Affairs Special Projects Coordinator, and Melissa Tooley, Director of the MBTC, with the 2005 Work Zone Safety Awareness Award.*

# AHTD and Gilbert Central Earn National Highway Quality Award

The Arkansas State Highway and Transportation Department and general contractor Gilbert Central Corporation of Omaha, Nebraska, recently received national recognition for their work on Interstate 40 as part of the Interstate Rehabilitation Program.

The National Partnership for Highway Quality (NPHQ) named AHTD and Gilbert Central as recipients of its 2005 State Award for their rehabilitation of approximately eleven miles on Interstate 40 near Conway in central Arkansas.

Bob Templeton, Executive Director of NPHQ, praised the team's "mastery of daunting challenges to provide a finished roadway of exceptional smoothness, safety and appearance."

"Due to the team's aggressive scheduling and the commitment of all contractor and Department personnel, this project was completed in a very timely manner while achieving an extremely high level of quality," adding that the final 234 days of "Site Use Time"

were well below other bids for the contract.

The extensive work plans called for rubblizing and overlaying the existing roadway, reconstructing two mainline bridges and updating all safety devices to meet current crash test requirements. The project faced a fair share of problems. The long section of Interstate 40 was located, for example, in a heavily traveled suburban area with a large concentration of morning and afternoon rush hour commuters. The average daily traffic count through the area was 58,300 vehicles. The contract mandated all lanes be kept open to traffic during peak hours - thus limiting the contractor to off-peak hours and weekends.



*Work on this stretch of Interstate 40 in Conway received local and national recognition.*

The solution was to use two hot mix asphalt plants to allow two crews to pave simultaneously, taking maximum advantage of every open minute. The work was performed in such a manner that the contractor earned incentives for early completion, asphalt mix quality, and the smoothness of the road. The project was recognized in 2004 by both the Arkansas Asphalt Pavement Association and the National Asphalt Pavement Association with a Quality in Construction Award for excellence in construction of asphalt pavement.

"We are joining with our peers in recognizing an exceptional product, exceptionally done – another national example of quality, value engineering and consumer focus," added Templeton.

The project was let to contract on April 9, 2003. Gilbert Central Corporation was the successful bidder with a low bid of \$32,925,885.03. The work order was issued on June 9, 2003, and the project was considered substantially complete on November 5, 2004.

NPHQ is a partnership among federal, state and roadway industry leaders and officials, whose shared advocacy of "customer-centered" practices has produced better, safer, more user-friendly roads and bridges that are completed faster, last longer and minimize congestion and inconvenience.



*Included in the project were reconstructing the main lanes and two bridges, and updating all safety devices.*

# Two Students Awarded SASHTO Scholarships



*University of Arkansas students Cody Hudson of Jasper and Jessica Jackson of Conway receive this year's SASHTO \$10,000 Scholarship Awards.*

The Arkansas State Highway and Transportation Department and the Mack-Blackwell National Rural Transportation Study Center (MBTC) have announced the recipients of this year's Southeastern Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (SASHTO) \$10,000 Scholarship Awards.

The recipients are Cody Hudson of Jasper, Arkansas, and Jessica Jackson of Conway, Arkansas. Both were students at the University of Arkansas and graduated in December of 2005 with Bachelor of Science Degrees in Civil Engineering.

Qualifications for the SASHTO scholarship specify that awardees be of junior standing or higher, including graduate students; have a minimum grade point average of 3.0; work on an AHTD sponsored research project; be a U.S. citizen or have permanent resident status; and accept full-time employment with the Department for a period of one year following graduation.

Hudson worked as a summer intern for the Highway and Transportation Department in 2003 and 2004. Last summer, he served as an intern for Garver Engineers. He is a member of the American Society of Civil Engineers (ASCE) and is a scholarship recipient from the Arkansas Academy of Civil Engineers. Hudson competed in the ASCE steel bridge regional competition for the last two years. He made the Dean's List in 2004.

Jackson was awarded a Presidential Scholarship from the University of Central Arkansas upon graduation from high school. She spent two years as a student trainee with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers in Little Rock. That exposure to the field of engineering set into place a transfer to the University of Arkansas to pursue a degree in Civil Engineering. She maintains a 3.32 grade point average. Jackson is committed to using her engineering degree to serve the people of Arkansas.

Hudson and Jackson are the second and third students to receive SASHTO scholarships in Arkansas. The first one was awarded to Jamey Wilhite in July of 2003. The awardees are selected by a committee consisting of the AHTD Assistant to the Director and three Assistant Chief Engineers, and the MBTC Director and Associate Director.

# Students Study Careers in Transportation

A group of young students spent several days this past summer at the Highway and Transportation Department in Little Rock learning about careers available to them in the field of transportation.

The 17 teenagers were attending the National Summer Transportation Institute, a program of the U.S. Federal Highway Administration. The Institute offers a four-week introduction to all modes and careers in transportation.

The students' visit began with a presentation by Staff Construction Engineer Emanuel Banks who shared the many opportunities available in the field of engineering.

Dorothy Rhodes, Advanced Research Study Engineer, also visited the students and talked about the use of Intelligent Transportation Systems on our highways.



*Students learn about the testing of soils with Reggie Cobb, Materials Laboratory Coordinator.*

Also on the agenda during the week was a visit from Jeff Covay, Senior Bridge Design Engineer and Steven Thomas, Advanced Bridge Design Engineer. The two shared bridge design principles and then challenged the students with a model bridge building contest.

Students wrapped up their week at AHTD with a visit to a wetland mitigation area on the Pine Bluff Bypass. Phillip Moore of the Environmental Division explained the impact of highways on the environment and considerations that must be made. John Miller, Section Head for Archeology, explained archeological considerations and Robert Fuhler, Section Head for Geographic Information Systems (GIS), shared the usefulness of GIS and data sets.

Students are selected for the Transportation Institute based on their interest in engineering and transportation, academic performance and recommendations from teachers.

The Institute is one of several educational initiatives of the U.S. Department of Transportation.



*Dorothy Rhodes visits with students about Intelligent Transportation Systems.*

Later in the day, students made a trip to the Department's Materials Lab where students saw tests being run on soils, core samples and fuels.

A question and answer session with Arkansas Highway Police PFC Robert H. Garrett and Corporal Jeff Bickerstaff proved to be popular as did the opportunity for a "hands-on" look at their patrol cars.



*A visit from the Arkansas Highway Police and a chance to tour a patrol car proved popular.*

# Annual Golf Tournament Benefits Arkansas Special Olympics



As they have for the past ten years, the Arkansas Highway Police hosted the Arkansas Highway Police/Special Olympics Classic golf tournament again this year. The popular event was held at the Harbor Oaks Golf Course in Pine Bluff on June 21st.



The day began with clear, sunny skies, and was a welcome change from last year's rainy event. A total of 49 teams participated in the tournament.

By the close of the day, the tournament had raised \$20,000 for Special Olympics Arkansas.

Inspector Jay Thompson of the Arkansas Highway Police contributes the ongoing success of the tournament to the hard work and dedication of the many volunteers.

"Every year, more and more employees of the Department are volunteering to help with the tournament," states Thompson.

"Every year, more and more employees of the Department are volunteering to help with the tournament," states Thompson.

During the opening ceremonies of the Special Olympic Games held in early June, the Arkansas Highway Police received the Top Fund Raising Award for the third consecutive year.

Special Olympics serves in excess of one million persons with mental and physical disabilities in over 200 programs in more than 150 countries.





# Truck Convoy Travels Interstate 540 to Benefit Special Olympics

In an attempt to maintain Guinness Book of World Record status, the Arkansas Highway Police joined other law enforcement agencies and truckers throughout the United States and Canada to hold the "World's Largest Truck Convoy" this past September.

Not only was the convoy an interesting sight to see or participate in, it was also a celebration of law enforcement's involvement in supporting the athletes of Special Olympics.

In Arkansas, over 40 trucks traveled on Interstate 540 on their way from Springdale to Lowell. The truckers traveled 22 miles to the FedEx Terminal where there was a celebration event afterward.

The international fundraising and awareness event is a unique partnership between law enforcement agencies and truckers. The two come together to raise funds for Special Olympics so the athletes can continue to train in year-round sports activities. Officers involved in the Law Enforcement Torch Run for Special Olympics

have made the truck convoy one of their many annual signature events.

"Special Olympics has a way of bringing everyone together, setting aside differences and building atmospheres of acceptance," said Ron Burks, Chief of the Arkansas Highway Police.

"The fact that Special Olympics can bring together law enforcement and truckers is a testament to how the athletes of Special Olympics are a true inspiration."

Nationally, the event featured 43 convoys and united more than 3,000 truckers in 32 states, Alberta and Ontario, Canada. The event raised \$6,500 in Arkansas and \$268,000 in North America.



(l. to r.) CPL Roy Martin, CPL Rudy Short, PTL Robert Johnson, CPL Brian Harwood, CPL Jimmy Accord, SGT Jack Stepp and SGT Reggie Chitwood.



The Special Olympics convoy heads down Interstate 540 towards Lowell.



Participants in the world's longest convoy discuss the day's activities.



Cooking up lunch are (l. to r.) AHP Captain Don Hastings and AHP Captain Ronnie Anderson.

# Dedications Across the Natural State

## Highway 549 Extends to Doddridge

Arkansas Highway and Transportation Department officials joined local officials on October 20, 2005, to dedicate the newest section of Highway 549 in the southwest part of the state.

A crowd of about 100 gathered on the new lanes of Highway 549 where it crosses Highway 71 at Fouke. Highway Commission Chairman Prissy Hickerson cut the ribbon to officially open the 12-mile section to Doddridge.

In December 2004, the Department opened the 13-mile section from Loop 245 in Texarkana to Fouke.

Now within five miles of the Louisiana stateline, this future leg of Interstate 49

south of Texarkana is a 25-mile, \$160 million roadway connecting Doddridge to Texarkana.

The \$68 million, 12-mile section from Fouke to Doddridge was constructed under four contracts. The first three were all let in 2001 to: James Construction for \$16 million for grading and structures; Jensen Construction for \$4.3 million for structures and approaches at Sulphur River; and to Cleve Batte for \$18 million for grading and structures from Fouke south. A fourth contract to Interstate Highway Construction for \$30 million was let in 2003 for the base and surface from Fouke to Doddridge.



## Hot Springs East-West Arterial Adds New Section

On October 25, 2005, Arkansas State Highway and Transportation Department officials joined a large crowd of local officials and residents to dedicate the newest section of the East-West Arterial in Hot Springs.

The new two-mile section connects Highway 70 to Highway 270. The \$35 million project also includes additional lanes on Highway 70 to match the divided highway section just west of Westinghouse Road, as well as the Highway 70 East Interchange.

A unique aspect of the project is the color scheme and decorative inlay treat-

ment on the pier columns of the new interchange that greets drivers coming into Hot Springs from the east. The colors match the official colors of the City of Hot Springs.

The arterial now loops nearly 12 miles around the southern side of Hot Springs from Highway 270 on the west to Highway 70 on the east. The total cost of the entire arterial is approximately \$72 million. Future plans include extending the arterial another 5.5 miles from Highway 70 to Highway 7 North near Fountain Lake.



## Ashdown Bypass is Completed As Final Section Opens

A large crowd gathered on Highway 32 in Ashdown on October 28, 2005, as Arkansas State Highway and Transportation Department officials joined local officials and others to officially open the final section of the Ashdown Bypass.

Now a five-mile, \$13 million two-lane highway, the Ashdown Bypass allows local traffic to travel Highway 32 around

the south side of town. The new roadway means a more convenient and safer route for the residents of the area.

This last one-mile section, from Highway 71 to Highway 32 East, was let to contract for \$2.4 million to Martin Marietta Materials in January 2004.

The other 3.7-mile section was opened in May 2004.



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*(Left) Prissy Hickerson addresses the crowd as local officials wait to open the road.*

*(Right) AHTD Director Dan Flowers and local officials assist as Arkansas Highway Commission Chairman Prissy Hickerson cuts the ribbon to officially open the new section of Highway 549 from Fouke to Doddridge.*



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*(Left) The new two-mile section of Highway 70 now connects the new Highway 70/70B interchange to Highway 270. The East-West Arterial is now a 12-mile, \$72 million divided highway.*

*(Right) Commissioner Carl Rosenbaum addresses a large crowd gathered to open the newest section of the East-West Arterial in Hot Springs.*



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*(Left) Senator Barbara Horn, with an escort from Highway Police, was the first to drive on the newly opened road.*

*(Right) With help from Representative Ken Cowling and Senator Barbara Horn, Highway Commission Chairman Prissy Hickerson prepares to cut the ribbon and open the final leg of the Ashdown Bypass. The one-mile section from Highway 71 east to Highway 32 is the final leg of the Bypass.*



## Highway 412 Improvements Hindsville

An open forum public hearing was held in Hindsville on June 16, 2005, at the Hindsville Community Center and Fire Department to discuss plans for improvements to Highway 412. Nearly 200 people visited the session.

Plans call for improving 7.3 miles of Highway 412 to four lanes extending from Highway 45 eastward to the Huntsville Bypass. Information on alignment alternatives and widening to four lanes on the existing alignment were available.

Information on improvements to Highway 412 between the Washington County Line and Highway 45 was also available. Plans call for widening this 5.3 mile section to four lanes.

Attending the meeting from the Highway and Transportation Department were District Nine personnel and AHTD staff members from the Environmental, Roadway Design and Right of Way Divisions.

## Interstate 69 Connector Pine Bluff and Star City

Open Forum Design Public Hearings were held in Pine Bluff and Star City, in June, to discuss plans for a proposed highway on new location to be constructed between Pine Bluff and Highway 278 near Wilmar.

Over 100 people attended the meetings held at the Central Presbyterian Church in Pine Bluff on June 27th and the Star City Civic Center on June 28th of 2005.

The public hearing in Pine Bluff focused on that portion of the new highway proposed between Interstate 530 in Pine Bluff and a future connector between Highway 11 and Highway 425, south of Star City. The next day in Star City, the focus of the meeting was on the section of highway extending from the Highway 11 and Highway 425 connector southward to Highway 35, northwest of Monticello. Plans showed a roadway that will ultimately have four travel lanes for the entire route.

AHTD Environmental and Right of Way staff, along with District Two personnel, participated in the meeting.

## Interstate 40 Interchange Conway

The Conway Parks and Recreation Center was the scene of an open forum public hearing on June 9, 2005. Over 100 people attended the meeting to learn more about plans for improvements to the interchange at Interstate 40 and Highways 25 and 64.

Plans call for improvements that will replace the present partial interchange at Interstate 40/Highway 64 and Highway 25 with a full interchange just west of the present location.

AHTD staff members from the Environmental, Human Resources, Roadway Design and Right of Way Divisions, as well as District Eight personnel, attended the meeting.

## Highway 167 Improvements El Dorado

An open forum public hearing was held August 16, 2005, at South Arkansas Community College in El Dorado for discussion of plans for improvements to Highway 167. Approximately 60 citizens visited the session.

The proposed improvement plans for Highway 167 include widening from two lanes to four lanes from Highway 82 northward to Highway 63, adding a frontage road and interchange modifications near the Hillsboro community.

AHTD Environmental, Roadway Design, Human Resources and Right of Way staff, along with District Seven personnel, participated in the meeting.



# Letters to the Department



STATE OF ARKANSAS  
MIKE HUCKABEE  
GOVERNOR

Dear Dan (Flowers),

I wanted to express my sincerest gratitude and appreciation for the wonderful job you've accomplished in conjunction with Governor Huckabee's Operation KARE. You exemplified the type of spirit and effort for which Arkansans are known, as we assisted our neighbors from Louisiana, Mississippi, and Alabama who came to Arkansas in the wake of Hurricane Katrina's devastation. Through your tireless work, many distraught people have found renewed hope, faith, and sanctuary in our state. This is truly a situation without precedent, in which you strived to make the best of an arduous and unparalleled task. The pride I have for the work you did is only matched by the gratitude of the people you served. Thank you for your perseverance, determination and dignity during this difficult time. Please know you have the respect and admiration of the people of Arkansas and of Governor Huckabee and his staff. May God bless you for all of your efforts.

Sincerely,  
Brenda Turner, Chief of Staff



Dear Mr. [Jeremy] Thomas [Construction Field Engineer II]:

Thank you again for taking time out of your busy schedule to come speak to the Career Orientation classes at North Heights Junior High. Our students always enjoy your hands-on activities and especially enjoy using the level. We appreciate the films and materials you bring. As I told you, one student said it was the most interesting thing he had done in my class all semester. That is a hard act to follow. Do you think it is time for me to go home? We look forward to seeing you again next fall.

Sincerely,  
Gail Skelton  
Texarkana, Arkansas

Mr. Russell Daniel, Resident Engineer Office #94:

You witnessed our accident on Highway 102, September 2, 2005. Thanks so much for all your help. The other guy was found at fault and his insurance is paying totally for our repairs. I doubt we'd have been so fortunate if you hadn't been there. I hope we meet up again someday - you're a sweetheart.

Janet & Jerry Stephens



JONESBORO (870) 935-9260    PARAGOULD (870) 236-8543    SEARCY (501) 279-9261    BATESVILLE (870) 698-9260

Dear Chief Ron Burks:

One of my drivers hit a railroad bridge with an excavator he was transporting near the intersection of Highway 63 and Interstate 55. I had the great pleasure of working with PFC Nick Phillips. He was kind, courteous, helpful, and even pleasant, under the circumstances. I was extremely impressed with his high level of integrity. He would not accept a free Gatorade, which I offered to all of the police and emergency personnel, but Nick insisted on paying for his drink. I have been in business for thirty years and I am not easily impressed. Officer Phillips is a real asset to your team. Thank you for choosing this admirable person to represent you in the field. I do not know how to put in words my appreciation for having Officer Phillips on the accident scene. Thank you.

Gary Ezell, Owner,  
Arkansas Equipment & Rentals



JONESBORO (870) 935-9260    PARAGOULD (870) 236-8543    SEARCY (501) 279-9261    BATESVILLE (870) 698-9260

Dear Chief Ron Burks:

Thank you very much for sending Corporal Darren Smith to our place of business. I found Darren to be personable, honest, very helpful and learned more in his short visit than I have in many years. I feel I can call on him any time to get a straight answer and to help in solving our problems. Again, I wish to commend you on the quality of men you are hiring. Though I have only presently met two, I have been impressed with both. I wish every company would invite Darren in for a personal meeting and question and answer session. I only regret we did not have this meeting years ago. Thanks again for your help in this matter.

Sincerely,  
Gary Ezell  
Arkansas Equipment & Rentals



3306 Southwest Dr. Jonesboro, AR 72404    3804 Linwood Paragould, AR 72450    2410 Taylor Dr. Searcy, AR 72145    4373 Harrison Street Batesville, AR 72501



3306 Southwest Dr. Jonesboro, AR 72404    3804 Linwood Paragould, AR 72450    2410 Taylor Dr. Searcy, AR 72145    4373 Harrison Street Batesville, AR 72501

Arkansas Highway Police  
To Whom It May Concern:

I had a flat tire today on Interstate 30 near Interstate Park. There had been an accident and traffic was backed up. I evidently punctured my tire on something in the roadway. I attempted to change the tire along the shoulder of the road. Arkansas Highway Patrol CPL Tom Simpson and a gentleman driving a van for JBL Electric stopped and assisted me. I am truly thankful for the help and wanted to convey my appreciation for their Samaritan efforts. In our fast-paced crazy world, it is not normal anymore to help someone you don't know because of fear for your own safety. Their kindness and concern made an unfortunate circumstance just a mild inconvenience. Please convey my heartfelt thanks to Officer Simpson, and let him know that sometimes the people he serves realize the value of the position he holds.

Many thanks,  
Marilyn Lee  
Matthew 25:40  
Little Rock, Arkansas

Arkansas Highway Police  
Chief Ron Burks

While being stopped by law enforcement for speeding is not something I have experienced on a regular basis (due to my good fortune), I can honestly say that this particular incident brought a smile to my face. PFC Anthony Lewis was extremely respectful, pleasant, and professional while doing his job. He is a credit to your team of law enforcement representatives and being stopped by him was more like getting nailed by your best friend – his mild-mannered and kind approach took the wind out of my sails (and my lead foot off the gas pedal) and I immediately felt relief that I had been stopped by someone with his demeanor. I'm sure it's not often that a person writes to convey their thanks for being issued a citation, but in this case, I am truly appreciative that I crossed paths with this officer. I drove away after receiving a ticket with my self-respect and dignity, even though I broke the law. Please pass my thanks on to Officer Lewis – he's one of the good guys!

Sincerely,  
Paula L. Crowe  
Charlotte, North Carolina



Dear Dan (Flowers):

Please accept this letter as an expression of gratitude on behalf of the County Judges' Association of Arkansas for taking time out of your busy schedule to participate in the Annual Spring Meeting of the County Judges Association of Arkansas that was held June 23-24, 2005. The judges appreciated your presentation. Your participation contributed immensely to the success of the meeting. It was well attended by 52 County Judges, their spouses, and a host of suppliers, vendors, and other guests. Additionally, the meeting provided the judges with a wonderful opportunity to gain valuable information pertinent to county government, as well as a much needed "getaway" from the day-to-day stresses of the job. Again, thank you for your participation in the meeting and for your support of the County Judges' Association of Arkansas.

Sincerely,  
David Morris  
AAC Staff Contact  
Little Rock, Arkansas

To Whom It May Concern:

On 24 May, my daughter-in-law and I were returning from the Little Rock Air Force Base on the bypass that goes by the airport. We had a flat. It was hot, and we were having trouble with the jack. Jim Watkins (Motorist Assistance Patrol Operator, District 6), stopped and introduced himself. He was off duty, but said he worked for the AHTD. He was nice, courteous, and a lifesaver to us. I wanted someone to know we appreciate it.

Thanks,  
Florene Goolsby  
Amity, Arkansas

Dear Mr. Dan Flowers:

On behalf of everyone at Arkansas Tech University, please accept our thanks for your understanding in adjusting the Interstate construction work scheduled for May 14. Our graduation ceremonies proceeded very smoothly thanks to your willingness to get involved. We invite you to visit our campus when your travels bring you through Russellville. If there is ever any way we may be of service to you, please don't hesitate to call.

Sincerely,  
Robert Charles Brown  
President, Arkansas Tech University

Arkansas Highway and Transportation Department:

Thank you for the newly opened Interstate 30 from Benton to South Little Rock. It is wonderful not to have the lane shifts. I wanted you to know how nice it is for drivers. God bless you.

Phyllis & Edwin Dennis  
Hot Springs, Arkansas

Dear Chief Burks,

We would like to thank and commend Officer Jason Daggs for his service above and beyond the call of duty. We were stuck on the side of an off-ramp in Knoxville, AR out of the line of sight of any passing cars except the ones exiting. We were in a rented minivan with a flat tire and even after calling for roadside assistance, there were several delays. After four hours, we were getting a little desperate for a "pit stop!" We called the AHP and you sent Officer Daggs. He not only drove us to a restroom a couple of miles away, but started to change our tire. While he was working on it, our replacement vehicle arrived. Since we were moving my daughter Kelly, from California to New York City, we had all of her personal belongings in the back of that van. Officer Daggs had to help us unload a packed minivan to get to the spare. When the replacement van arrived, he helped us reload her belongings. We are so thankful to Officer Daggs. Even though this incident happened back in October, we could not let his kindness go without a huge "thank you" and to let you know, Chief Burks, that you have a great officer in Jason Daggs.

God bless you!!  
Sherrie Johnson  
Fullerton, California



Arkansas State Highway and  
Transportation Department  
Post Office Box 2261  
Little Rock, AR 72203-2261

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**FORWARDING SERVICE REQUESTED**

